A LETTER

TO

JACOB BRYANT, Esq.

CONCERNING HIS DISSERTATION

ON THE WAR OF TROY:

BY GILBERT WAKEFIELD, B. A.

LATE FELLOW OF JESUS-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Ὡς Αιας επετελλε πελωριος·—ϐδε κε φαιης
Ουτε ποτ' ηελιον σοον εμμεναι, ϐτε σεληνην. HOMER.

Jupiter ortus erat: pro magnâ teſte Vetuſtas
Creditur: acceptam parce movere fidem. OVID.

Hear then, quoth he, the tenor of my tale,
In ſort as I it to that ſhepherd told:
No leaſing new, nor grandame's fable ſtale,
But ancient truth, confirm'd with credence old. SPENSER.

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1797.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ON THE LAW OF HEAT:

COMPRISING THE DIFFERENT MODES

OF

JACOB BRAYNAL, Esq.

TO

VALLEE

A

LETTER

TO

JACOB BRYANT, Esq.

SIR!

WHEN your Diſſertation firſt appeared, I immediately conceived, that the eſtabliſhment of your theory, in oppoſition to ſuch a concurrence of traditional evidence through all antiquity, muſt materially impair, but unintentionally on your part, the cogency of one argument in favour of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Revelations. Not ſuppoſing it, however, poſſible for you to effect your purpoſe, and being fully occupied at the ſame time in my own purſuits, I had neither read your book, nor beſtowed any further conſideration on the ſubject of it: when, a few days ago, a learned and ingenious gentleman ſent me his Diſſertation on Greek and Latin Proſody, which is introduced by a dedication to yourſelf; and, amidſt an extremely

juſt and honourable encomium on your talents and erudition, acknowledges an entire conviction from the number and quality of your arguments, that the ſtory of Troy is fabulous in all it's parts. This fulneſs of perſuaſion in ſo reſpectable a ſcholar, againſt the multifarious prejudices of unſuſpecting and habitual acceptance, induced me to purchaſe your Treatiſe; and the following remarks are the reſult of that curſory peruſal, which ſufficed to ſatisfy me of the perfect vanity of it's contents; with reſpect, I mean, to the proof in queſtion: for it cannot be ſurmiſed for a moment, that one of your learning and vigour of intellect can produce any work without entertaining and inſtructing the moſt accompliſhed ſcholars of the age.

You ſay, p. 9. "I adhere firmly to Varro's aſſertion, that the Greeks "had no certain intelligence before the Olympiads. Now the war of "Troy is placed ſome centuries before that æra." Theſe premiſes, ſir, may be perfectly unexceptionable in themſelves, but will prove, I truſt, altogether inefficient in weakening the credibility of a fact ſo univerſally tranſmitted and believed as the ſiege and deſtruction of Troy. Will you allow then, ſuppoſe, the prevalent tradition of a deluge among heathen nations to be but a mean preſumption in favour of that event, becauſe of it's long precedence to written records, and the Olympiads of Greece? Or would the preſent condition of Jews and Chriſtians, do you think, if all their literary monuments were aboliſhed, be deemed an incompetent evidence, that their traditionary doctrines iſſued from an authentic ſource? or could it be reconcileable to reaſon and experience upon any ſuppoſition but that of the ultimate veracity of their pretenſions? It is unqueſtionably moſt evident, that hiſtoric repoſitories are not abſolutely eſſential, and in ſome caſes, ſimilar to that of Troy and the revealed diſpenſations, not even much ſubſidiary, to the claims of authenticity, and the enforcement of rational belief.

But,,

But, before I proceed to the body of your Diſſertation, and to ſave myſelf the trouble and expence of ſuperfluous remark, (not finding ſuch favourable acceptance with the gracious ſyndics of our *Alma Mater* as you happily experience) I ſhall premiſe *two* general propoſitions; by which alone, I am perſuaded, every plauſible veſtige of argumentation, every deluſory appearance of probability, in ſupport of your hypotheſis, is compleatly done away: and, till theſe previous maxims were confuted, I might hold myſelf excuſed from a circumſtantial examination of your Diſſertation in detail. The propoſitions in view are theſe:

1. No leading point in hiſtory, of various connexion, abundant atteſtation, and general belief from a remote antiquity contiguous to it's achievement, can be diſproved, or diſcredited, by the diſagreements and inconſiſtencies of writers, relative to concomitant circumſtances of ſubordinate conſideration: and much leſs by the vague and arbitrary conjectures of ingenious diſputants in diſtant ages.

The whole fabric of genuine hiſtory ſo entirely reſts, I apprehend, on the ſolidity of this baſis, and every capital hiſtoric fact, delivered down by different reporters, conſtitutes ſo clear and deciſive a demonſtration of the theorem before us, that an illuſtration of it by ſpecific inſtances ſeems totally ſuperfluous, and ſavouring of inſult to the ſagacity of any reader, not deſtitute of hiſtorical information.

2. Such a fact, as I ſtated above, cannot be invalidated by arguments derived from poëtic fable; which takes a ſtriking event merely as a groundwork, and has always been indulged in a ſuperinduction of adventitious embelliſhments, either reſulting from an exaggeration and modification of received truths, or from an abſolute invention of imaginary circumſtances.

This propoſition appears to me no leſs reaſonable and incontrovertible than the former; and to theſe I ſhall take the liberty of referring, if occaſion offer, in my future progreſs through the various ſections of your Diſſertation: and, where I am ſilent, I ſuppoſe theſe propoſitions alone a ſatisfactory confutation.

Let me obſerve, in paſſing, the injuſtice of your cenſure on Macrobius and Meurſius in your note at p. 11. a cenſure, ariſing from a defect of critical information, which I diſcover in ſeveral paſſages of your book. A ſcholar, Sir! like you, "and a ripe and good one," ſhould have recollected numerous objections to the authenticity of that laſt book of the Iliad, as the work of the genuine Homer; objections, in all probability, preſent to the mind both of Macrobius and Meurſius on the ſpecified occaſions. You are preſented with one ſpecimen of thoſe ſuſpicious ſymptoms of adulteration at leaſt in the very firſt word of that Iliad: a word, without a parallel in the undiſputed remains of Homer's poëtry. But this by the way, after a gentle ſuggeſtion, which ſhould have ſpared you the trouble of your whole performance, and me this interruption from a more grateful and urgent taſk: TANTAMNE REM TAM NEGLIGENTER AGERE!

What you advance from p. 12. to 17. appears to me radically extirpated by my ſecond propoſition: if not, yet ſurely the grave teſtimony and elaborate reaſonings of ſuch an author as Thucydides, in the introduction to his hiſtory, with every opportunity of poiſing the probabilities of this fact, and with all the ſagacity requiſite to a ſenſible diſcrimination, muſt be regarded by all mankind as authority infinitely preferable to the theoretic hypotheſis of any ſcholar on the verge of the nineteenth century! Is it neceſſary to enlarge on this ſtatement; to enter into a moroſe diſcuſſion of conjectural allegations, ſo ſlenderly ſupported; to ſtrengthen my general topic by examples, to diverſify it's light, or change it's attitude? On one hand,

hand, are placed *Wiſdom*, *Hiſtory*, and *Tradition without diſpute*: *learned Speculation*, and *ingenious Surmiſes*, on the other:

Φραζεο, Τυδειδη, και χαζεο· μηδε θεοισι
Ισ' εθελε φρονεειν· επει ϐ ποτε φυλον ὁμοιον
Αθανατων τε θεων, χαμαι ερχομενων τ' ανθρωπων.

The ſimple poſtulates, which I would premiſe, as the foundation of the Trojan hiſtory, under the fact of it's general acceptance with antiquity, and which, I think, every man muſt concede me, are, in general, ſuch as theſe: "That, in thoſe prædatory ages, one people, after an incurſion on the ter-" ritories of another, amongſt other booty, carried away the beautiful wife " of a powerful chieftain, who had intereſt enough with the neighbouring " reguli to engage them, from motives of friendſhip, military glory, con-" ſanguinity, or plunder, in his quarrel; and that ſuch a combination of " warriors, after a long war, prevailed over their adverſaries, and razed their " city to the ground." After this credible and reaſonable requeſt, at which I ſhould expect no demur, whatever elſe occurs of tradition or hiſtory, interwoven with theſe principal requiſites, of a nature highly improbable in itſelf, incongruous to the ſtate of ſociety at that time, and not eſſential to the ſolidity of the main fabric, ſuch as Leda's egg, I mean, Diana's ſtag, the preciſe number of men and ſhips and captains, and a thouſand other ſubordinate peculiarities of no moment to the queſtion of credibility as to the capital event,

———— quicquid Græcia mendax
Audet in hiſtoriâ—;

may be ſafely abandoned, as unimportant acceſſories, wholly fictitious, or mere ornamental appendages of the poët's fancy. Hiſtory and tradition may be diſguiſed, diſtorted, and overwhelmed, by a multiplicity of extraneous operations and incumbrances; but they are hiſtory and tradition ſtill,

and

and cannot be annihilated by any proceſs of innovation and disfigurement. The cryſtallization may have accumulated to what extent you pleaſe; there is ſtill, however, one ſolid particle latent at the centre, the elementary conſtituent of the maſs, without which that cryſtallization could never have been formed. At the ſame time, I think it proper, notwithſtanding this latitude of indulgence, clearly warranted by the ſtability of the principle, to ſignify my private opinion on this ſubject; an opinion, which ſeems, if neceſſary, very capable of defence: namely, that Homer, in the names of his heroes, in his liſt of warriors, his geographical delineations, and, in ſhort, the whole œconomy of his work, reſpecting perſons, places, policies, and manners, departed much leſs, than many have ſuppoſed, from the real ſtate of things at that period, and intermingles with ſome fable a large portion of authentic hiſtory.

You ſeem to be aware of the propriety of this diſtinction on ſeveral occaſions; as where you ſay, p. 16. "It may be ſaid, that *ſome part* of this "hiſtory is a fiction;" but, ſeduced, as it ſhould ſeem, by a love of paradox and the faſcination of a favourite hypotheſis, you elude the rational deduction, by turning from the way, and purſuing your aberrations. It is probable, that the poet would not forego the means of intereſting his readers by as much truth as was conſiſtent with his other purpoſes of ſurpriſe and entertainment.—But to proceed in our diſcuſſion.

You ſay, p. 16. "Thucydides, however ſagacious and a lover of truth, "could not ſet aſide the hiſtory of the Trojan war. For the glory of "Greece was thereby greatly enhanced, and it afforded a powerful ſanction "to the religion of the country." An admirable *ſagacity*, no doubt, which could not detect the moſt groſs and incoherent fallacies with ſuch opportunities of enquiry; and an exemplary *love of truth*, beyond all controverſy, that could ſink the ſanctity of a hiſtorian in the frivolous affections

of national vanity and deſpicable ſuperſtition. Commend me to ſuch a delectable character of this moſt reſpectable witneſs of antiquity!

——————— pergis pugnantia ſecum
Frontibus adverſis componere?

Again, p. 17. "How comes it then, that juſt at this criſis there ſhould "have been ſuch unanimity between the moſt diſtant ſtates—?" Why, truly, at this remote period, nothing can be more viſionary and fantaſtical than gratuitous queſtions of this nature; nothing leſs rational than the ſuggeſtion of difficulties, moſt eaſy of ſolution probably in thoſe days, but, amidſt the darkneſs of primæval hiſtory, utterly incapable of explication now: though, perhaps, the peculiar objection here ſtarted partakes not of this unmanageable nature. It appears to me a moſt inexcuſable waſte of time and talents, *intemperanter abutentis et otio et literis*, to reaſon and conclude without the neceſſary premiſes of diſquiſition; and to urge dogmatical objections equally applicable to every extraordinary event on record: and ſuch an event certainly was the Trojan war eſteemed by the Greeks. "How comes it then," I might ſay, "that the art of printing, after being "practiſed partially from the earlieſt times, ſhould be ſimplified and com-"bined in ſuch a wonderful contrivance, all at once, at an interval of two "thouſand years?" And ſo on, *ad infinitum:* or, in other words, "How-"came any thing either to be tranſacted, or diſcovered, at all?"

As little ſtreſs can be laid upon your argument in p. 22. from the nautical ſkill of a nation at one time to the ſame ſkill in that nation at another; eſpecially, too, in the caſe of events accompanied by a very different proportion, perhaps, of zeal, intereſt, or ambition. The Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Spaniards, Portugueſe, and almoſt all other famous navigators, might be alledged as a pertinent illuſtration of this point. Beſides, your argument reſts after all upon the mere *opinion* of two writers againſt poſitive fact adduced

duced by yourſelf; and is indeed utterly unworthy of ſerious regard. When the Satyrs in Euripides complain,—one, that he is too far off for execution; another, that he is ſeized with ſudden lameneſs; and a third, of ſome aſhes got into his eyes: do you ſuppoſe, that theſe poltroons were not as capable of co-operating with Ulyſſes in his attempt upon the Cyclops as they had been a few minutes before, when they made ſuch a ſhew of reſolution, and ſuch boaſtful offers of aſſiſtance? Yes, ſurely; there was no alteration in the *ability* of theſe ανδρες πονηροι, theſe APOSTATE SCOUNDRELS of old time; but in the EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES only!

> Scis, Proteu! scis ipſe; neque eſt te fallere cuiquam:
> Sed tu deſine velle—.

You ſay, p. 26. "Another difficulty ariſes from the ſtate of their ſhip-"ping, which one would imagine, in the ſpace of ten years muſt have "been rendered uſeleſs.—And though the fleet muſt have been in a ſtate "of ruin, yet we read not of any repairs." Now, without recurring to conjectural ſolutions of a conjectural difficulty, without equipping one phantom of the brain to combat with another; without taking refuge in the copious reſources of poëtical invention; I ſhall content myſelf with a plain reply from the Archæologia, vol. xi. p. 164. "The Royal Sovereign, "built by Pett in 1637.—continued a uſeful and valuable ſhip in our navy "untill the beginning of the preſent century. She was in all the actions "at ſea during the reigns of Charles II. and William III. and did great ſer-"vice in the fight off La Hogue in 1692." *Hunccine an hunc ſequeris?* Shall we accept Mr. Bryant's *rêveries*, or Mr. Willett's *facts*?

After all, this *ten* years' war may have been but little more than *eight*; as a round ſum would be readily adopted by poets, ever ſtudious of the great and marvellous. If any part whatever of the firſt and laſt year were occu-

pied,

pied, the cuſtomary computation would of courſe make *ten* of *eight* entire years and *two* fragments only:

——— decumum quos diſtulit Hector *in* annum.

You know, Sir! extremely well how to reckon "the *three days* and *three* "*nights* in the body of the earth," without the ſmalleſt encroachment on the eſtabliſhed uſages of antiquity.

Your ſubſequent objections through ſeveral pages are derived from Homer only, and reſt therefore upon mere poëtical exaggeration, amidſt the gloom and uncertainty of collateral tranſactions: they have, accordingly received their reply:

——— εχθρον δε μοι εστιν
Αυθις αριζηλως ειρημενα μυθολογευειν.

P. 39. "As Homer had the precaution to bring an inundation to ſweep "away the rampart, I wonder, he did not make uſe of the ſame expe- "dient to account for the non-exiſtence of the city. For there were no "traces of it to be found; nor any ancient memorial of it's having ever "exiſted. Lucan accordingly tells us, that when the Romans under Cæ- "ſar viſited Troas, and examined the whole region, not the leaſt remains "could be obſerved—*etiam periere ruinæ*. The author, by making mention "of ruins, muſt neceſſarily have ſuppoſed an antecedent place; but De- "metrius Scepſius, a native of Troas; alſo Heſtiæas Alexandrinus, and the "geographer Strabo, an Aſiatick, with ſeveral others, could never upon "enquiry find out, where the city could poſſibly have ſtood—."

In oppoſition to theſe fabrics of baſeleſs viſion, let me relate a fact of ocular and perſonal experience. *Flawford* church, a ſolitary building in the fields, about five miles from Nottingham, was one of the moſt celebrated

and ſpacious ſtructures of it's kind, with three or four exceptions, in that county. When I was at ſchool in that neighbourhood in the year 1766, the building was ruinous, but burial ſervice was occaſionally performed in it by my maſter, a clergyman now living. I have been ſeveral times in the church myſelf to ſee ſome ancient monuments of cruſaders, mentioned by Thoroton in his hiſtory. To prevent accidents, it was entirely demoliſhed, and the ſteeple thrown down, by ſome colliers from Lord Middleton's pits at Wollaton. In the year 1784, or 5. I went with two others to contemplate the ſpot, where this romantic pile had ſtood. Exactly as I knew the place, we could only aſcertain it, and that after much diligent ſpeculation, by the protuberant lines, which marked out the main walls, and a few hillocks of ſtone, completely covered with graſs and moſs. Such obliteration had time occaſioned, ὁ Χρονος πανδαματωρ, in no longer a period, than that employed by Iſocrates in the compoſition of his *panegyric*.

Beſides, if it were not my preſent object to refute objections, without collecting proofs, which are innumerable and efficient, I might notice what occurs in the ſame page of your diſſertation, the viſit of Alexander to Troy, and his tranſactions there. Is it credible, that any thing ſhort of conviction, ariſing from immemorial, uninterrupted, and undiſputed tradition, in men of an inquiſitive diſpoſition, and addicted to a philoſophical exerciſe of their faculties, which the ſubſequent tranſactions of that conqueror abundantly evince, could have given riſe to ſuch a ceremonious and ſignal undertaking? To ſuppoſe, however, ſuch conviction under ſuch circumſtances to be altogether fanciful and nugatory, ſeems ſomething like approximation to an *effect* without a *cauſe*, ſtrikes at the very root of human teſtimony, and delivers up to boundleſs ſcepticiſm, and wild ſuſpicion, all the tranſmitted notices of mankind. What could have riveted ſuch ſtrong perſuaſions in Alexander and the ſucceſſive inhabitants of that region, but domineering probabilities of a previous reality?

All

All that you advance in pp. 43. 44. admits of an eaſy anſwer from this very probable ſuppoſition; that neighbouring inhabitants would remove the materials of former buildings for their own purpoſes; and that time and agriculture would in no long period efface every ruin of a city eraſed ſo many generations before Strabo lived. Nor, on account of the infinite variety in contingencies and connexions, that elude all calculations of learning or ſagacity, can we ſafely argue from the remains of one demolition to the continued indications of another.

Even on the ſuppoſition of an equal lapſe of years in both caſes, it is obvious, that incidental cauſes may remove the very wrecks of one city, and leave another in it's original ſtate of ruin, undilapidated and unmoleſted, through a ſeries of ages. In ſuch inſtances, the application of learning is but a ſolemnity of trifling; ſuppoſition is vain, and argumentation frivolous.

I can ſcarcely tell, Sir! what to make of your objection in p. 51. "There remained not only no trace of any ſuch city as Troy; but the "very name ſeems to have been for a long ſeaſon unknown. We read of "Ilium and Ilienſes; but the names of Troja, and Trojani, were foreign to "the country." In our reaſonings upon theſe points of remote antiquity, we ſeem to forget the paucity of our documents; and expect that every minuter fact ſhould be aſcertained with as much preciſion as if the art of printing had multiplied written memorials to the extent of our own times, and we were diſcuſſing events but of yeſterday and the day before. We of this iſland, for example, are accuſtomed to ſpeak of ourſelves rather as *Engliſhmen*, and of our country as *England*, than to ſtile the one *Britons* and the other *Britain*; but the man, who ſhall hereafter argue from this prevalence againſt the latter name and place, will be moſt egregiouſly miſtaken. And this remark is applicable to your objection above ſtated, if I rightly appre-

hend it. In ſhort, grave magiſterial diſputation in the midſt of ſuch darkneſs and uncertainty is, according to my judgement, as compleat a conflict with chimæras, as even a feveriſh delirium could occaſion: and of this σκιομαχια there is no ſcarcity in your Diſſertation on the War of Troy.

In your *corollary*, however, at p. 52, you have exhibited in my behalf a clear and ſatisfactory ſummary of the whole ſubject in debate; which I recommend to the diligent peruſal of the reader, as compleatly ſubverſive of the greater part of your Diſſertation. You reverſe the ſuppoſed conduct of St. Paul: ἀ ὠκοδομησας, ταυτα παλιν καταλυεις. I will ſubmit to abide by your ſtatement there.

Your conjectures in p. 53. will not meet, I ſhould think, much cordiality of reception with the greater number of your readers; whom you muſt expect to be ſomewhat ſcandaliſed at one, who attempts with infinite complacency, whilſt he is endeavouring to diſprove the fancies of *others*, to impoſe upon us with new unauthoriſed romances of *his own*. Your ſuppoſitions, however, on the poems and the poet, I reſign to the praiſe or diſpraiſe of the reader, according to his varying perſuaſion of the validity of your theories; and ſhall content myſelf with adverting to the fallacy of your concluſion here, and in p. 71. from the Græcian character of the heroes' names in the Iliad; a fallacy, clearly ſhewn by the tranſmutation, which the oriental appellations of the Perſian and other kings in ſcripture have undergone, from the operation of the ſame Græcian artiſts: with which circumſtance, no man is better acquainted than yourſelf, from your pre-eminent ſcholarſhip in this department of ancient literature.

P. 56. " It is remarkable," you ſay, " that *Homer* ſtiles the princes in " each army ποιμενες λαων, *Shepherds of the people*. This was an Ægyptian " title; and I believe to be found only in that country, and ſome nations in " the

" the eaſt." I can ſcarcely conceive an argument more ſuperficial, precarious, and even improbable, than this. The original ſtructure of language is laid on ſenſible objects, and the uſages of common life. The paſtoral ſovereignty was the earlieſt ſpecimen of lordly authority among men: how natural then, and even unavoidable, was the tranſlation of paſtoral terms to the ſimilar relation of a monarch and his ſubjects? Hence Homer calls *kings*, as you obſerve, *ſhepherds of the people*; and Æſchylus denominates an *army* of ſoldiers, *a flock of ſheep*, Perſ. 74. Now, when no literary monuments of comparable antiquity are extant beyond the Bible and Homer, I cannot diſcover, if ſimilar manners muſt generate in a great degree a ſimilar language, why Homer as a Græcian may not be allowed to employ ſuch a term as that under contemplation, without any communication with oriental literature, or oriental manners. Such a primæval ſimplicity of hieroglyphic diction conſtitutes a very powerful preſumption of genuine antiquity in a writer; but ſeems ſuſceptible, I think, of no other application or inference whatever.

After you have enumerated the various inconſiſtencies on the affairs of Troy in ancient writers of Greece and Rome, from p. 66. to p. 71. you exhibit the following concluſion: " From the evidence above given, we " may, I think, conclude, that the account concerning Troy was foreign to " Greece, and imported from another region. For no genuine hiſtory of " any country was ever rendered ſo inconſiſtent by the natives."— But what are we to underſtand by *natives?* With what propriety can the authors ſpecified by you be called *natives* of *Troy?* And, if not natives, where is the pertinency of your argument? Certainly, if the *natives* of any country have diſagreed materially in their traditions, or written memorials, of any remarkable tranſaction from the very time, in which this tranſaction was ſuppoſed to take place; the tranſaction itſelf, uncorroborated by extrinſic evidence, and failing in it's eſſential circumſtances, muſt immediately be-

come ſuſpicious in the groſs, and the balance of probability may preponderate againſt it. But what benefit your ſtatement can receive from theſe conceſſions, when the witneſſes are neither Trojans, nor contemporaries, nor, for the moſt part, grave hiſtorians, but the viſionary votaries of poëtic inſpiration, is beyond the mediocrity of my diſcernment to perceive.

I can allow you, p. 72. that Cybele "was the peculiar and provincial "deity of Phrygia:" but ſurely you muſt confeſs, that other deities might ſhare her honours, and even ſuperſede her for particular unknown reaſons, in particular diſtricts of that country; becauſe many analogous interferences with the main deity might be pointed out in other countries of the ancient heathen. Or this worſhip of Cybele might prevail to ſuch extent in later ages only; for you muſt excuſe me, if I require proof, previous to aſſent, of this confident aſſertion, that "the worſhip of Cybele, Mater deorum, prevailed "all over Phrygia, LONG BEFORE HOMER'S TIME." But the ſecret may be known to you:

——————————— ut forte rogatus,
Dum petit aut thermas, aut Phœbi balnea, dicat
Nutricem Anchiſæ; nomen, patriamque, novercæ
Archemori; dicat, quot Aceſtes vixerit annos;
Quot Siculus Phrygibus vini donaverit urnas.

And here, Sir! though this is not the firſt ſpecimen that has fallen in my way, your very high and juſt reputation as a ſcholar will not ſuffer me to paſs by p. 73. without animadverting on your ſtrange *neglect*, for I will not ſay *ignorance*, of the eſſential proprieties of the Greek language. The paſſage in view is from Apollonius Rhodius, i. 1124.

Βωμον δ' αυ χεραδος παρεννηεον· αμφι δε φυλλοις
ΣΤΕΨΑΜΕΝΟΙ δρυΐνοισι, θυηπολιης εμελοντο:

which you ſhould have rendered thus: " They formed an altar with ſtones " heaped from the ſhore; and, after CROWNING THEMSELVES (not, the " *altar*) with leaves of oak, they turned their attention to a ſacrifice." You may ſee another ſhameful error of this kind in the editors of Oppian pointed out by me in my Silva Critica, vol. iv. p. 129.

P. 78. What can be more unjuſtifiably preſumptuous and chimerical, than your confident deciſion upon the inſignificance of Mycene, againſt the poſitive arguments and expreſs judgement of Thucydides? not to mention the groſs improbability of a wanton deviation in Homer from the general truth of hiſtory, where no poëtical inducement ſeems to render ſuch a violation neceſſary, or commodious. Indeed, I am compelled by the ſtrong incitement of my feelings to declare, that I have no where read a more gratuitous, fanciful, and unſolid performance, as a piece of reaſoning, in oppoſition to every thing venerable and authentic, than your Diſſertation on the War of Troy, except only the production of a man, whoſe company you will not be fond of encountering; I mean, *Thomas Paine's* moſt profligate, raſh, audacious, and ignorant attack on Revelation.

Two ſatisfactory anſwers may be given in few words to your objections in pp. 78. 79. 80. 81. from the names of Homer's heroes, as the ſame with thoſe of ſome heathen deities. 1. The univerſal celebrity of this expedition, and the character even of religious ſanctity, which had accrued to the works of Homer with antiquity, occaſioned a transfer of the names of his heroes to the gods; and ſo this deification was in reality poſteriour to the war of Troy. To the contrary of this ſuppoſition, I defy you to bring any proof, and the paſſages from Lycophron are a powerful preſumption in it's favour. Or, 2. What ſhould prevent the parents of theſe heroes from calling their ſons by the names of deities; as *Dionyſius*, for inſtance, was the name of two well known kings of Sicily? Theſe ſimple allegations, " though " they

" they may be palliated and extenuated by one, *who wiſhes to be deceived*, " yet are of themſelves ſufficient to overturn" any ſyſtem of mere hypothetical ingenuity: which is a retort of your own language, not ſufficiently liberal and decorous, in p. 84.

Chryſoſtom's oration, of which you ſpeak in p. 86. I ſee not in my Eton edition of that father's works; and therefore can ſay nothing to his teſtimony. I preſume, however, that you did not find much to your purpoſe there, from your tranſitory mention of his performance, and the mere *aſſertions* tranſcribed from him.

Your arguments from p. 86. to p. 90. which have the moſt appearance of intrinſic ſolidity and poſitive corroboration from ancient teſtimony, I venture to aſſert, are founded upon the groſſeſt miſconception, and in part miſrepreſentation, poſſible, whether in yourſelf, or others. Why, Sir! when Anaxagoras,* Metrodorus, Heraclides Ponticus, and innumerable writers more, both naturaliſts and moral philoſophers, ſpoke of the Iliad as a *phyſical allegory*, or a ſyſtem of *ethic Wiſdom*, they not only do not *ſtrongly intimate* their diſbelief, but never had the leaſt intention of diſputing the fact, that Troy was beſieged and taken by the Greeks: but were ſimply of opinion, that Homer had ſo modelled his relation of theſe events, by a very copious intermixture (as they, doubtleſs, thought) of imaginary events and fictitious perſonages, as to render his poem a perfect adumbration of the grand truths of moral and natural philoſophy. If Metrodorus really carried his opinion to ſuch a length as Tatianus has reported of him, what would ſuch a ſentiment evince in oppoſition to the concurrent evidences of antiquity? Truly, that the moſt fantaſtic whimſies, the *ægri ſomnia* of the poet, could ſometimes take poſſeſſion of ancient, as well as *modern*, literati: and no more. Now, Sir! there are ſects of Chriſtians at this day, moral and well-intentioned, who regard the whole hiſtory of the New Teſtament as a

piece

piece of parabolic ſcenery: do you wiſh their chimerical theories to prevail with poſterity over the ſober judgements of yourſelf and other learned rational believers, to the prejudice of the ſacred volume, as an authentic record of what "was *heard*, and *ſeen*, and *handled*, of the word of life?" I trow not.

P. 90. "Herodotus rejects the Cyprian verſes with the *utmoſt contempt*; "and ſhews as little reſpect for Homer, whom he looks upon as equally "fabulous. He accordingly ſays with the utmoſt diſdain—Ὁμηρος μεν νυν "και τα Κυπρια επεα χαιρετω. *Away with them together: a long farewell "to each, both to the Cyprian verſes and Homer.*" Sir! your eagerneſs to ſupport a monſtrous hypotheſis has hurried you into a boldneſs of inference, and a licentiouſneſs of interpretation, that fill me with aſtoniſhment and ſorrow. Not one particle of this paſſage conveys the moſt ſhadowy intimation either of belief, or diſbelief, in the mind of Herodotus on the point in queſtion. If your inference could have been drawn, which it cannot, with any ſemblance of probability from a mere expreſſion, the fallacy of it might have been demonſtrated from numerous paſſages of unqueſtionable acceptation in the ſame author. Herodotus means to ſay merely, and innumerable proofs of my expoſition are at hand, that "it was high time to diſmiſs "Homer, and the Cyprian verſes;" purely intimating, that he had beſtowed as much attention as was allowable in a *hiſtorian*, whoſe object is *authentic fact*, on a mere *poet*, whoſe province is alſo *fancy* and *embelliſhment*.

——————— Pictoribus atque poëtis
Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua poteſtas.

Let the learned judge between us; and whether the teſtimony of Euripides, advanced in p. 90. be not for the ſame reaſon mere deluſion and puerility on this occaſion.

P. 92. " Were any modern hiſtory," you conclude, " of whatever " country, attended with the fiftieth part of the inconſiſtences, with which " the war of Troy abounds, it would be ſet aſide at once, and rejected with " ſcorn." What a maſs of indigeſtible propoſitions you muſt have ſwallowed, before you could ſtomach this concluſion without inſtantaneous regurgitation! O dura Bryantis ilia!

——————— σιδηρειον νυ τοι ητορ.

1. A *ſingle fact* compared with *a modern hiſtory of a country!* ſo as to render your real meaning unaccountably obſcure. 2. No diſtinction is made between *incongruities* of *ſubordinate circumſtances*, and the *reality* of the *grand event*, conformably to the ſpirit of my *firſt* propoſition; which I cannot but conſider as indiſputably accurate. 3. Not the leaſt conſideration of the remote antiquity of the period in queſtion, the rude ſtate of mankind in thoſe days, the non-exiſtence of literary monuments to tranſmit their tranſactions with fidelity to ſucceeding ages, and the lamentable wreck of early literature, which has thrown an impenetrable veil of darkneſs over the ancient hiſtory of Greece, and the ſurrounding countries. Now all theſe conſiderations render inappoſite your compariſon of the *war of Troy*, with any circumſtance of *modern hiſtory*. And to theſe ſuggeſtions others might be added in confutation of your incoherent and confuſed aſſumption.

P. 93. " Homer intimates ſtrongly, that Æneas remained in his native " country, and there reigned, and his poſterity after him: Il. Y. 307." Now the truth is, he intimates nothing at all about it any way; nor drops a ſingle word, that does not harmoniſe in the moſt friendly correſpondence with the future reign of Æneas over the Trojans, as related by Virgil, and other writers. Homer's prophecies, like all other prophecies of heathen theology, are either poſterior to the event, or conveyed in ſuch general language, as will ſuit any event whatever; ſo that you *may* accommodate his

words to your hypotheſis, in contradiction to all other evidence, if you pleaſe; but we much more rationally accept an interpretation in perfect uniſon with the concurrent teſtimonies of other poets and hiſtorians.

Aut *videt*, aut *vidiſſe putat*, per nubila lunam.

Some peculiar difficulties preſent themſelves in the verſes of Hermeſianax, in p. 148. on which it may not be amiſs to beſtow a few words, as I clearly ſee, and will unqueſtionably *prove*, that neither yourſelf, Caſaubon, the moſt learned of the moderns, nor Ruhnkenius, (at quales viri!

Quos longe ſequor, et veſtigia ſemper adoro!)

underſtood that paſſage, upon which the meaning of the entire paragraph ſeems to turn; and which indeed furniſhes the key of my interpretation.

Αυτος δ' ουτος αοιδος, ὀν εκ Διος αισα φυλασσει,
ΜΗΚΙΣΤΟΝ παντων δαιμονα μεσοπολων,
Λεπτην γ' εις Ιθακην ανετεινετο, θειος Ὁμηρος,
Ωδῃσι, πινυτης εινεκα Πηνελοπης·
Ἠν δια, πολλα παθων, ολιγην ΕΣΕΝΑΣΣΕΤΟ νησον
Πολλον απ' ευρειης λειπομενος πατριδος.
Εκλαιε δ' Ικαρῳ τε γενος, και δημον Αμυκλῃ,
Και Σπαρτην, ιδιων ἁπτομενος παθεων.

In ver. 2. the copies have Ἡδιστον, which cannot aſſociate with δαιμονα, nor yet with αοιδος, but by the utmoſt irregularity of conſtruction. Ruhnkenius accordingly corrects Κυδιστον: but let the critical reader judge, whether my emendation be not more plauſible; as well from the affinity of the letters, and the frequent omiſſion of the firſt, as from it's ſuperior ſuitableneſs to the ſubſtantive. We might read alſo thus:

Ἡδιστον παντων ΑΔΟΝΑ μεσοπολων·

 ſuaviſſimum

ſuavisſimum LUSCINIUM *poëtarum:* for nothing is more common than errors from a concurrence of many ſimilar ſtrokes of letters: but the former attempt has the greater probability. The congruity of tenſes, moreover, appears to require εσεναστετο, for εσεναστατο: but this is immaterial. Now my notion of the paſſage is briefly this:—As nothing was compleat without Homer, our poet, rather than deprive himſelf of ſuch a ſplendid addition to his catalogue of illuſtrious *inamoratos*, was determined to introduce him at all events; and therefore muſt be underſtood to ſpeak of him here with the licence of imagination, in his mere *poëtical capacity*. In this view the following admirable paſſage from Virgil, ecl. vi. 61. is moſt happily appropriate; and furniſhes an exquiſite ſpecimen of the conſummate artifice of that genius, without a rival for poëtic language, and poëtic numbers, among the ſons of inſpiration:

Tum *canit* Heſperidum miratam mala puellam:
Tum Phaëthontiadas MUSCO CIRCUMDAT amaræ
Corticis, atque ſolo proceras ERIGIT ALNOS.

Certainly, the introduction of an *imaginary lover* among ſo many *realities* is an objection to my interpretation, which I have attempted to obviate; but the true grammatical ſenſe of the words forms, on the contrary, an inſuperable obſtacle to your notion: and that ſenſe I proceed to aſcertain. You thus tranſlate the ſecond diſtich: "Homer condeſcended to retire to "the mean iſland of Ithaca out of love to Penelope, with whoſe wiſdom he "was enamoured." You could make nothing of ωδηϛι, you will acknowledge; and ſo, like other diſſemblers of a difficulty, you craftily paſs it over in your verſion. But this αδοκιμος νϖς is not to be approved either in theology, or criticiſm. The γε too, it is palpably evident, was not apprehended by you, or the reſt, who have been employed on theſe verſes. Now the literal tranſlation of the phraſe, ανετεινετο ωδηϛι γε, is this: *Se ſurſum dirigebat, vel contendebat, ſaltem carminibus:* i. e. quaſi dixerit;" "Amabat "Penelopen

" Penelopen *ſaltem* quoad potuit; *carminibus* tenus ſcilicet viſens Ithacam, " ſi non *pedibus* utique." Which demonſtrates, that the whole voyage is to be regarded as a poëtical fiction only, and not underſtood as a reality; ſo that the ſucceeding diſtich muſt be received merely for an ornamental building-up and elegant continuity of the apologue, as in a multiplicity of parables and ſimilar inventions of poëtic imagination. Sir! if the difficulty of a heterogeneous mixture, mentioned above, ſtill preſſes, let the poet look to that. I will ſtake what little reputation I may have acquired for a knowledge of the Greek language, upon the rectitude of this grammatical conſtruction, and challenge any man to diſprove it. Moreover, the laſt diſtich plainly ſhews of itſelf, that Homer's courtſhip of Penelope was only intended to be *figurative*; and conveys ſimply a perſuaſion of Hermeſianax, that Homer, in his *loves*, his *wanderings*, and *ſorrows*, had a tacit reference (which is extremely probable) to his own experience; invigorating both his plaintive and jocund ſtrains with the zeſt of perſonal ſenſibility.

However, before I quit this ſubject of verbal criticiſm, as it is foolithly and diſparagingly called, which indeed will occupy the remainder of theſe pages, impartiality and a love of my occupation induce me to notice two failures in your exerciſe of this difficult and uncertain art. In the following verſes, Od. Δ. 176.

Και πασι λαοισι, μιαν πολιν εξαλαπαξας,
Αι περιναιεταασι, ανασσονται δ' εμοι αυτω·—

I paſs by your unſcholarlike inſertion of the final ν before the digamma in the ſecond verſe, (a groſsneſs, which it is ſurely high time at length to diſcontinue) to mention that your conjectural ſubſtitution of ιδιαν for μιαν would not only lead us to ſuppoſe *Lacedæmon* itſelf to be intended, but is rendered moſt ſuperfluouſly tautologous by the concluding words of the following line. Your emendation, therefore, is in every reſpect inappoſite and

intolerable: otherwiſe, from the proximity of the letters, it would have been entitled to the praiſe of conſiderable ingenuity; a praiſe that cannot be conceded to another effort of the ſame kind in your Diſſertation; for your conjecture on Od. I. 26. is at once bold, and unneceſſary; nay, deſtructive of the true purport of Homer's meaning.

Ναιεταω δ' Ιθακην ευδειελον·—αμφι δε νησοι
Πολλαι ναιεταασι μαλα σχεδον αλληλῃσι·
Δουλιχιον τε, Σαμη τε, και ὑλησσα Ζακυνθος·
Αυτη δε, χθαμαλη, πανυπερτατη ειν ἁλι, κειται
Προς ζοφον, αἱ δε τ' ανευθε προς ηω τ', ηελιον τε·
Τρηχεῖ', αλλ' αγαθη κουροτροφος—.

In the laſt line but one, you change αἱ δε τ' into αυταρ againſt all critical probability with reſpect to the reſemblance of the letters; and through no leſs than three whole pages, with moſt unſucceſsful turmoil, you enlarge on the difficulties of a paſſage, as perſpicuous and intelligible as any deſcription of this nature could poſſibly be made in the ſame compaſs.

Φαιης κε γυιων νιν ὅσον σθενος ελλοπιευειν·
Ὧδε οἱ ῳδηκαγτι κατ' αυχενα παντοθεν ινες,
Και πολιῳ περ εοντι.

Permit me to give you a plain literal tranſlation of the diſputed words: and after comparing this exhibition of our author with the correcteſt maps, and your friend's ocular repreſentation of the place in p. 143. you will acknowledge Homer to be a moſt accurate chorographer; ſome preſumption, that he is not quite ſo much of a fabler in other reſpects, as you have laboured to repreſent him. "Now Ithaca itſelf, low," (with reſpect to the elevation of the reſt above the ſurface of the water) "higher up in the ſea than "them all, lies toward the weſt; but they, apart, to the eaſt and the ſun: "rugged, yet an excellent nurſe of youths—." Such is the ſimple purport of the phraſeology; which, I believe, has all the accuracy of delineation, that

that can be expected in a poem, and might almoſt ſatisfy the ſcrupulous moroſity of a land-ſurveyor.

You conclude your Diſſertation with diſcuſſing a point of metrical propriety through *ſix* pages, with as much ſolemnity and form, as if no man had touched on the ſubject before: whereas the queſtion has been profeſſedly ventilated by Dawes in his Miſcellanea Critica, by D'Orville on Chariton, and by Mr. Burgeſs in his edition of Dawes: to whoſe remarks I have added ſomething in ſect. xxx. of my Silva Critica, and in my notes on Lucretius, ii. 1102. iv. 77. and beſides this, I have by me ample materials for a further illuſtration of this topic. With reſpect to the words Σκαμανδρος, Ζακυνθος, Αιγυπτιης, Ἰστιαιαν, Ιφιγονη, Αντιγονη, and a variety of others, in heroic or elegiac meaſures, and certain poſitions of iambics or trochaïcs; Dr. Clarke, to mention no more, has been exceedingly perplexed: nor have I met with one perſon, in writing or converſation, whoſe notions on this ſubject were clear and ſatisfactory.

> Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,
> Pulveris exigui jactu compreſſa quieſcent.

All theſe are PROPER NAMES: but proper names *muſt* be uſed: ſuch a neglect, therefore, of the general laws of proſody in theſe inſtances is not *licence*, but *neceſſity*. After this admonition, you will acknowledge with pleaſure, the facility and reaſonableneſs of this ſolution in a thouſand puzzling examples through the poets of both languages.

And here, Sir! I ſhall cloſe my ſummary review indeed of your Diſſertation on the war of Troy, but, as I perſuade myſelf, ſufficiently circumſtantial and prolix for the purpoſe under contemplation: a review, conducted with a freedom congenial to my life and manners, but without malignity, which is a ſtranger to my breaſt: with a reſpect, bordering on reverence, for your various

various and profound erudition, by which I have been ſo often delighted and improved; but with no compaſſion for learned extravagances, no, not "the "dreams of Jove" himſelf. It is a defect of judgement, not a diſtemper of the heart; the caſual aberration of a rapid pen, not intentional hoſtility; if I have ſprinkled more ſalt through the preceding pages, than what was needful to preſerve ſuch a frail fabric as an occaſional pamphlet of a diſregarded writer from preſent inſipidity and ſpeedy putrefaction.

Ειη μη ποτε μοι τοι-
-ϐτον ηθος, Ζευ πατερ· αλλα κελευθοις
Ἁπλοαις ζωας εφαπτοιμαν, ϑανων ὡς
Παισι κλεος μη το δυσφαμον προσαψω.
Χρυσον ευχονται, πεδιον ϑ' ἑτεροι
Απεραντον· εγω δ', αστοις ἀδων και
Χϑονι, γυια καλυψαι-
-μ', αινεων αινητα, μομ-
-φαν δ' επισπειρων αλιτροις.

Believe me, Sir! with every ſanguine wiſh for the continued ſerenity of the evening of your life, and the peaceful enjoyment of your great literary honours, ſo generally paid, and ſo juſtly due;

Your ardent admirer,

and ſincere Friend,

GILBERT WAKEFIELD.

Hackney, March 12, 1797.

ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑΝ.

J